

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of receiving software over a network, the method comprising:
 selecting an application software from a first web site coupled to a network;
 downloading a packaging file on a client computer coupled to the network,
 the packaging file including the selected application software and a relatively
 small first stage software, the first stage software including instructions for
 downloading another application software from a second web site coupled to the
 network;
 accepting the other application software for download from the second
 web site to the client computer;
 running the first stage software; and
 downloading the other application software onto the client computer.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the other application software is divided
 into several chunks and each of the chunks is downloaded one after another onto the
 client computer.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the first stage software has a size less
 than about 100Kbytes when compressed.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the network includes the Internet.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein the first stage software is included in the
 packaging file as part of an agreement between an operator of the first web site and
 another operator who wants to promote distribution of the other application software.
6. A method of obtaining software over a network, the method comprising:

selecting a first software from a first site;

downloading the first software on a client computer;

downloading a relatively small second software to the client computer in response to the selection of the first software, the second software including instructions for initiating a download of a third software from a site other than the first site; and

downloading the third software to the client computer as a series of individually downloadable portions.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the third software is located on a second site that is linked to a third site, and the second software includes instructions identifying the third site as a source of the third software.

8. The method of claim 6 wherein the network includes the Internet.

9. The method of claim 6 wherein the third software includes an application software.

10. The method of claim 6 wherein the second software has a file size less than around 100Kbytes when compressed.

11. A system for distributing software comprising:

a first server computer having a set of web pages and a first downloadable software;

a second server computer having another set of web pages, a second downloadable software, and a relatively small first stage software;

a client computer having a web browser, the client computer being configured to receive the first stage software by downloading the second

downloadable software, the client computer being configured to receive the first downloadable software in chunks by following instructions included in the first stage software; and

a network coupling the first server computer, the second server computer, and the client computer.

12. The system of claim 11 wherein the network includes the Internet.

13. The system of claim 11 wherein the second downloadable software and the first stage software are bundled together in a single file.

14. The system of claim 11 wherein the second downloadable software and the first stage software are in separate files.

15. The system of claim 11 wherein the first stage software identifies a third server computer as a source of the first software, and the third server computer is linked to the first server computer.

16. A method of distributing software over a network, the method comprising:
bundling a first stage software with a first application software available for download from a first server computer;

storing a second application software on a second server computer,
the second application software being offered to an end-user who wishes to download the first application software; and

downloading the second application software in chunks to an end-user who agrees to download the second application software, the second application software being downloaded in accordance with instructions included in the first stage software.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein the network includes the Internet.

18. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

checking if a new version of the first stage software exists prior to downloading the second application software.

19. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

offering a third application software to an end-user who wishes to download the first application software; and

downloading the third application software in chunks to an end-user who agrees to download the third application software.

20. The method of claim 16 wherein the first stage software is relatively small.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein the first stage software has a file size less than about 100Kbytes when compressed.

22. A method of downloading a file from a server computer comprising:

downloading a configuration file, the configuration file identifying at least a first file to be downloaded; and

downloading the first file in chunks and in accordance with a desired bandwidth utilization.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein the desired bandwidth utilization is included in the configuration file.

24. The method of claim 22 further comprising:

keeping track of each chunk downloaded to a client computer designated to receive the first file; and

in the event of a download error, restarting the action of downloading the first file by downloading a next chunk following a chunk successfully downloaded to the client computer.

25. A method of downloading a file over a network comprising:

transmitting a test data;

determining the time it takes to transmit the test data to generate a bandwidth consumption figure; and

downloading a chunk of the file based on the bandwidth consumption figure and a desired bandwidth utilization.

26. The method of claim 25 further comprising:

keeping track of each chunk downloaded to a client computer designated to receive the file; and

in the event of a download error, restarting the downloading of the file by downloading a next chunk following a chunk successfully downloaded to the client computer.

27. The method of claim 25 wherein the action of downloading a chunk of the file based on the bandwidth consumption figure and a desired bandwidth utilization includes adjusting the size of the chunk.

28. The method of claim 25 wherein the action of downloading a chunk of the file based on the bandwidth consumption figure and a desired bandwidth utilization includes adjusting an amount of time allocated for transmitting the chunk.